

# PASSPORT DENIAL

**A**nother tool provided to state and federal government by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) is Passport Denial. PRWORA requires the Secretary of State to refuse to issue a passport to any person certified by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) as owing a child support debt greater than \$5,000. Further, the Secretary of State may take action to revoke, restrict, or limit a passport previously issued to an individual owing such a child support debt.

## **How does the process work?**

All cases receiving full child support services through the local or state child support agency are eligible for passport denial. Persons who owe child support debts greater than \$5,000 will be sent a passport denial Pre-Offset Notice, which also includes information about the Federal Tax Refund and Administrative Offset programs.

Through the Federal Offset process, states submit to the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) those cases that meet the criteria for Federal Tax Refund and/or Administrative Offsets. When a state submits a case with arrears exceeding \$5,000, OCSE automatically forwards that case to the State Department for passport denial unless the case has been specifically excluded from the Passport Denial Program.

When an individual applies for a passport, the State Department denies the application based on the child support obligation owed by the applicant. When the State Department denies an application for a passport, a notice is sent to the non-custodial parent explaining that the passport application was denied because of delinquent child support, and advising the applicant to contact the appropriate state child support enforcement agency, listed on the notice, for further information.

## **What steps should I take if my passport has been denied because of a child support debt?**

You must contact your local child support agency to make satisfactory arrangements to pay your delinquent child support obligation. If more than one state reported a delinquency in excess of \$5,000, you must reach an agreement with all states involved in order for the passport to be released.

Once the debt has been satisfied or a satisfactory agreement has been reached, the state(s) will request that OCSE remove you from the passport denial process. It takes approximately two weeks from the time OCSE receives a request for removal for the State Department to withdraw the passport denial. After the denial of the passport has been withdrawn, you must reapply for your passport and pay any accompanying fees. Fees are not refunded when your passport application is denied.